

**MINNEAPOLIS PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT**  
**MINNEAPOLIS PLAN AMENDMENTS**

**DATE:** July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002

**PROJECT NAME:** Text and Map Amendments to the Minneapolis Plan:  
– New Land Use Feature--Transit Station Area (TSA)  
– Associated amendments related to TSAs and LRT corridor planning

**SUBMITTED BY:** Planning Department

**CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE:** Mike Larson, Planning, 673-2423

**WARDS:** 2, 6, 9, 12

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:**

- Corcoran Neighborhood Organization
- East Phillips Improvement Coalition (EPIC)
- Longfellow Community Council
- Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA)
- Seward Neighborhood Group
- Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association (SENA)
- Ventura Village
- West Bank Community Coalition

**CURRENT MINNEAPOLIS PLAN DESIGNATIONS:**

**Activity Center:** *Cedar-Riverside (includes 7 Corners)*

**Auto-Oriented Shopping Center:** *Minnehaha Mall*

**Commercial Corridors:** *Franklin Avenue, Lake Street*

**Community Corridors:** *Cedar Avenue, Riverside Avenue, 38<sup>th</sup> Street, Minnehaha Avenue, 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue*

**Industrial/Business Park Opportunity Area:** *Hiawatha Corridor (including Seward Industrial Park)*

**Major Housing Sites:** *Hiawatha/Minnehaha Corridor, Midtown Greenway*

**Neighborhood Commercial Nodes:** *Bloomington & 25<sup>th</sup> Street, 38<sup>th</sup> Street & 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, 38<sup>th</sup> Street & Cedar Avenue, 38<sup>th</sup> Street & Minnehaha Avenue, 50<sup>th</sup> Street & 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue*

**Major Study Areas:** *Cedar-Riverside LRT Station Area, Franklin LRT Station Area, Lake Street/Midtown LRT Station Area, 38<sup>th</sup> Street LRT Station Area, 46<sup>th</sup> Street LRT Station Area, 50<sup>th</sup> Street/Minnehaha Park LRT Station Area, VA Medical Center LRT Station Area*

**Potential Growth Center:** *Lake/Hiawatha*

## **BACKGROUND:**

The Minneapolis Plan is the principal planning document for the City of Minneapolis (the City's "Comprehensive Plan", as defined by State statute). It is used to guide and evaluate City policies, programs and ordinances (including capital improvements, redevelopment, and regulatory tools like the zoning code). Amending this document is therefore an important task in providing a clearer path for development, redevelopment and public infrastructure along the Hiawatha LRT line.

The Minneapolis Plan includes general policy language as well as geographically designated Land Use Policy Features. Land Use Features in and around Minneapolis neighborhoods include "*Commercial Corridor*", "*Community Corridor*", "*Neighborhood Commercial Node*", "*Major Housing Site*", "*Auto Oriented Shopping Center*", and "*Activity Center*". Staff is proposing a new Land Use Feature called *Transit Station Area (TSA)*. Recommended text of this feature is attached as part of this staff report. Staff is also recommending changes to some existing Land Use Policy Features. An overview of current features, and the respective staff recommendation, is also attached for your review.

Staff sought input and participation from different stakeholders regarding these amendments. Participants included staff from Planning, the MCDA and Public Works. A distribution list for these proposed amendments included neighborhood groups, community development corporations, elected officials and agency staff. Information was also posted to the City's web site.

Staff recommends incorporating the proposed changes to two chapters of the Minneapolis Plan. Chapter 4 (*Marketplace: Neighborhoods*) of the Minneapolis Plan addresses land use, public investment, and urban design in Minneapolis' neighborhoods. Chapter 9 (*City Form*) of the Minneapolis Plan also addresses urban form.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) planning principals are articulated in the proposed text amendments to Minneapolis Plan. Informed by station area and corridor-wide planning, the four general policy/implementation areas address density/land use mix, urban design principles, pedestrian/bicycle/bus connections, and parking. Specific plans for LRT station areas are detailed in station area master plans.

## **FUTURE RELATED ACTIONS:**

### *City Council action*

Amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan require action by the City Council. Following action by the City Planning Commission, staff will forward these amendments to the Zoning and Planning Committee for review and action.

*Metropolitan Council review and approval*

Adoption of amendments to a municipality's comprehensive plan also requires review and action by the Metropolitan Council. Staff will recommend that the Minneapolis City Council adopt these amendments contingent upon review and approval by the Metropolitan Council, at which time the amendments will take effect. The Metropolitan Council has the authority to recommend or, in some instances, require changes to a municipality's comprehensive plan. If this unlikely event were to occur, the Minneapolis City Council would address these issues under separate action.

In general, the City's land use plan does not meet the normal standards of a land use component of a metropolitan municipality's comprehensive plan. The Minneapolis Plan is based upon general policy language and geographic features that have no exact extent. The Metropolitan Council relies upon detailed land use information and forecasts to identify impacts on regional systems, including wastewater treatment, regional highways, and transit systems. The City has adopted specific station area plans for four of its six neighborhood LRT station areas (seven including the VA Medical Center station area). The Metropolitan Council has requested, and City staff are preparing, information summaries for the individual station areas for which there is more detailed proposed land use changes. This information will accompany the submittal of the text and map changes proposed herein.

*Regulatory alignment*

According to State statute, regulatory controls must come into alignment with proposed changes to land use as identified in the Comprehensive Plan. Planning Department staff are analyzing station area land uses and current zoning against proposed long-term land uses in station area plans as well as against the proposed Transit Station Area land use feature in the Minneapolis Plan.

Staff will identify locations in Transit Station Areas (TSAs) where base zoning designations are clearly inconsistent with what is identified in the station area master plans, and will recommended appropriate changes. These will be areas where the extent of property ownership (whether private or public) closely matches the urban form (e.g., a contiguous project area) as envisioned in a station area plan (e.g., Hi-Lake Center)

Changes to zoning alone may sometimes be inappropriate if there are needs for infrastructure or more complex land assembly. Changes to zoning alone might encourage premature and/or inappropriate land use conversion that does little to meet the urban design and density goals envisioned in station area plans. In these cases, staff may propose zoning amendments for future adoption as redevelopment occurs. Because the MCDA is concerned about removing regulatory and administrative barriers to successful transit oriented development, staff wishes to engage the Planning Commission about the mechanism for and timing of these changes.

Staff also anticipate an overlay zoning district of general applicability in the neighborhood LRT station areas. This is tentatively referred to as a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Overlay. Rather than encompass an ad hoc area, the extent of this district will likely be limited to key areas including corridors, commercial and industrial property, and other parcels identified for

future land use change in specific station area plans. The primary purpose of this designation would be to prevent the expansion or introduction of land uses that are inconsistent with the TSA designation and/or specific station area plans. These regulations can also ensure appropriate site and building design standards and altered parking regulations, as well as incentives for development within the TSA. The TOD Overlay will build upon the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District.

*Redevelopment planning*

MCDA redevelopment planning and implementation activities will occur, and may include amendments to redevelopment TIF districts and plans, such as the modification of district boundaries and/or budgets.

Specific development approvals, whether privately or publicly sponsored, will likely require review by the Planning Commission, and may include subdivision, rezoning, site plan review, and conditional use permits.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval to the City Council of the proposed Transit Station Area language and associated changes to the Minneapolis Plan, as identified in the attachments.

**Attachments:**

- Transit Station Area (TSA) proposed Minneapolis Plan language
- Recommendations on Existing Land Use Policy Features
- Existing South Quadrant Land Use Policy Map